

Collection Development Policy of E-Resources in Nigeria Libraries: Certified Librarians Perception

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Abstract

Recently certified librarians are revolutionizing the library profession by collaborating with peers and colleagues from all ages to make things happen. This paper investigates certified librarians perception on collection development policy of e-resources in Nigeria libraries. The design of the study is cross sectional survey and the population consists of 364, 1st Conference of Certified Librarians by Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) held in 2014. The instrument used to generate data is the questionnaire and the data generated was analyzed using frequency, bar charts, tables, percentages and mean. The outcome of the study reveals that many libraries do not have a written e-collection development policy; a committee for planning and evaluation of e-collection management; and no e-collection selection criteria. This situation can be traced to the poor knowledge and skill of librarians on e-resource management. Training and retraining of librarians on e-resources collection management, formulation and development of e-resources policy, the constitution of e-resources management committee among others were recommended.

Key words: collection development, collection development policy, e-resources, Certified Librarians perception, Libraries

Introduction

In this, era of information age where digital information and knowledge dominates, users' expectations and information sources are different from the past. These changes or development affects library services across the world. A very important aspect of library services influenced by the advent of Information Technology (IT) is the collection development. Collection development primarily involves selection, acquisitions, evaluation and preservation of materials in the library after assessing user's needs. Electronic resources have caused a change or review of the libraries collections and management practices of libraries. IFLA, (2012) described electronic resources as those materials that require computer access, whether through a personal computer, mainframe, or handheld mobile devices. They are increasingly important component of collection-building activities of libraries and may be accessed remotely via the internet or locally. Libraries are now being described as traditional, hybrid, digital or electronic. Traditional libraries are turning into hybrid, digital and many to digital libraries (Yeow-fei, 2012). This description is basically from the format of the collection of the library that is the adoption of e-resources. Part of the challenges of the digital era is how to integrate electronic resources with print resources on a finite or dwindling budget without reducing the services of libraries (Get with the digitalization of library resources, there is need for policy change. The entire philosophy of collection development needs to be changed, technology related factors have to be incorporated, budgeting has to be modified to include hardware and software costs, collection development librarian has a large and more complete set of resources from which to select (Golwal and Moltewa, 2012)

Statement of the Problem

The advent of IT has resulted in information explosion. The amount of information resources in digital form is daily on the increase and in different form. The proliferation of e-resources collection has become a challenge to libraries as a lot of information are now available to people without having to use the library. The need for libraries to use e-resources to the advantage of the library as well as the users is crucial. As a result, there is need to change and adopt policies and resources that will promote the better management of digital e-resources.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to investigate certified librarians perception on collection development policy of e-resources in Nigeria libraries. It is also aimed at identifying the tools and techniques for e-collection, as well as makes appropriate recommendations on sustainable e-resources collection in Nigeria libraries.

Research Questions

- i. Do libraries have e-collection policy?
- ii. Is there e-collection development evaluation committee/team in libraries in Nigeria?

- iii. Are there selection and evaluation criteria for e-collection of libraries in Nigeria?
- iv. Do librarians in Nigeria have training in e-resources management?
- v. Do libraries in Nigeria have specific budget for the management of e-resources collections?

Literature review

➤ Collection Development

Collection development is the systematic building of a library collection based on meaningful data rather than subjective choice. It is the process of assessing the strength and weakness in a collection and then creating plan to correct the weakness and maintain the strength. The process of collection building includes selection of current as well as retrospective material and the evaluation of the existing collection (Kumbar and Hadagali, 2005)

Collection development as defined by Seetharama and Ambuja (2000) is a communication tool for management, librarians, users and other libraries; a detail outline of collecting levels; a description of collection development responsibilities; and budgeting tool that helps librarians decide where to place resources. Collection development (CD) is a well planned activity for which a well defined policy is essentials; it is a vital process in creating and building a library collection. It is applicable to all types of library (Barik and Shethy, 2009) CD in libraries means rich and sound collections of systematic, comprehensive, balanced and updated documents to meet the user's information needs. It comprises planning, goal setting, decision making, budgeting and acquiring materials and evaluating them (Balaque, 2012). The development of electronic resources takes the same process as the traditional materials. Traditional collection development criteria apply to most electronic title in the library (IFLA, 2012). Collection development is a process of systematically building library collections to serve study, teaching, research, recreational and other needs of library users. It involves selection, acquisition, evaluation and preservation of materials after assessing user needs (Golwal and Motewar, 2012)

➤ Electronic Resources

Shukla and Mishra (2011) described electronic collection as the collection of information which can be accessed only by the use of electronic gadgets. IFLA (2012) refer to electronic resources as those materials that require computer access through personal computer or mobile devises. Frequently used electronic resources in libraries include:

- E-Books: books in electronic format
- E-journals: publication issued at regular interval and available electronically
- E-Reference Books/database: electronic reference books or materials like biographies, dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.
- E-audio/visual resources, E-images, Numerical and statistical databases, indexing and abstracting databases, etc. (IFLA2012, and Shukla & Mishra, 2011).

➤ Advantages of E-Resources in Libraries

The adoption of e-resources in libraries continues to grow because of the advantages attached to their use. These may be attributed to the following advantages:

- It is the quickest method of access of information in comparism to other traditional methods
- Its updating is easy for the producers and beneficial to users
- It is economical compare to traditional collection
- It is also economical in terms of space; it require no physical space
- It is flexible and can be formatted to suite users
- Its access and use may not be location or time specific
- It is easily searchable (Shukla and Mishra 2011, and Balanque, 2012)

➤ Challenges of E-Resources

Kumbar and Hadagali (2005) identified providing access that matches the technological capabilities of both library professional and user; providing access that satisfies the profit motive of commercial e-publications; and collection development that require knowledge of the electronic delivery mechanisms as some of the challenges militating against the efficient and effective use of e-resources in libraries. The challenges of electronic resources collection and management in libraries are the problem of user training, technological up-grading, financial constraint, IT skill manpower, perisherible citation: once online, if website changes, URLs citations disappear, authentication, etc. (Behera & Singh 2011, Balanque 2012)

➤ Collection development Policy

A policy is a guide to the successful implementation of a process. Gessesse (2000) stated that the activities

of librarians should be guided by a written collection development policy. The library collection development policy must be written or revised to include electronic resources. According to Barik and Sethy (2009) collection development is a set of rules or norm adopted for developing the collection or stock in library. A collection development policy is a printed statement of a library's intention for building its collection. It considers the collection's strength and weaknesses and provides guidelines for staff (Golwal and Motewar, 2012). Collection development policy:

- Helps assure that the library will commit itself to serving all parts of the community, both present and future.
- Helps demonstrate that the library is running a business-like operation
- Helps set standards for the selection and weeding of materials
- Serves as an in-service training tool for new staff
- Helps minimize personal bias by selectors and to highlight imbalances in selection criteria
- Helps assure continuity in collections of any size and provides a pattern and framework to ease transition from one librarian to the next.
- Serves as a tool of complaint handling with regard to inclusions or exclusions
- Provides a means of staff self-evaluation, or for evaluation by outsiders
- Contributes to operational efficiency in terms of routine decisions (Gardner, 1981 in Golwal and Motewar, 2012).

Collection development has a direct effect on access to library and information resources in a library, it determines whether the collection contains the kinds of materials that are needed or not. Collection development policy boost the library staff for better performance and also facilitates a continuous, consistent and balanced growth of library collection. It has a great impact on all the activities of the library (Kumbar and Hadagali, 2005).

Ikem (1995) opines that collection development policy is the vehicle through which the library achieves the goals of its readers' services. Proper budgeting (in line with the collection development policy) and its careful operation are vital to the success of library services activities. It should be used as a planning and monitoring instrument. Just as no group of activities can succeed without proper planning, so also the activities of meeting users needs cannot succeed without proper policies and monitoring.

He further states that "for purpose of progress and development, the performance of library activities should be evaluated over certain periods, strengths, and weaknesses in services, which can be used as basis for actions and future plans." Power (1943) observes that, "one of the most meaningful ways to judge the quality and effectiveness of a library's services is to measure how well it is meeting the needs of the users. If the user's needs are mostly not met, then the library acquisition policy needs to be re-appraised and modified. The policy must at all time be scientifically managed if the library is to fulfill its mission." For any collection development policy to be acceptable it must reflect six basic elements identified by Tamuno (1995) as reported by Ikem (1995). They are philosophy, needs assessment, goals and objectives, implementation, administrative control, and evaluation.

➤ **Electronic Resources in Nigeria Library**

With the advent of the Internet, researchers and academics have recognized the capabilities of the information and communication technologies as efficient means to share results and to get around barriers by full transfer of intellectual property rights from the author to the publisher, it is also a means of improving the slow turn-over of traditional publishing (Correia and Neto, 2006). E-journals relatively provide efficient access to information and, thus they are easy to distribute to library patrons than traditional print; in the financial stringent environment of higher education system, electronic journals have become a medium which is cheaper than the traditional printed journals (Ellis and Oldman, 2005). According to Rowley (2006) electronic journals take two different forms: journals that are published in print form, available in digital form and electronic journals which do not necessarily need a publisher, and which can be managed by an editor and the scholarly community. Both types may have a significant impact on scholarly communication and in the way knowledge is created and disseminated.

According to Ikoja-Odongo (2002), over a long period of time human beings have been able to record their memories, ideas and discoveries into forms that are classifiable such that information organizers have been able to produce certain categories of information resources. He asserts that information can be classified by content matter or by the physical format by which information is kept. The information resources classified by physical format include: written sources, databases, technical reports, grey literature and electronic resources, among others.

Muteshewa (2004) reveals that traditional libraries stored different types of information resources in different formats in buildings. Various tools and guides to locate these resources were available only when a

patron physically visited the library. The situation has now changed and access to these guides has become paramount. He asserted that with the advent of computers and telecommunication technologies, libraries and information services can provide access to these resources through work-stations like PCs and terminals that are in patron's offices as well as in the library.

Hawkins (2000) emphasizes that the library of the future will have the daunting mission of helping scholars discover what relevant information exists anywhere in the world and in a variety of formats and media. Understanding how students navigate this maze of resources is important in helping the librarians to develop and assess pedagogy designed to instruct students in library use. Shuling (2007), electronic information has gradually become a major resources in every university library. The emergence of electronic information resources, simply referred to as electronic resources, has tremendously transformed information handling and management in academic environments. The death of current and up-to-date information for research in university libraries is attributed to poor levels of developing electronic resources, (Afolabi, 2007; Faborode, 2007 ;). Libraries need to be vanguards for technology transfer from the developed world to the developing economies of Africa; to meet these expectations African university libraries must provide a link between local researchers, scholars and their counter parts in other parts of the world. Utilization of online information resources is the way of achieving this objective. According to Tsakonas et al (2006) electronic resources are information resources provided in electronic forms, and these include resources available on the Internet such as e-books, e-journals, online database, CD-ROM databases and other computer base electronic networks, among others.

➤ **The Internet**

According to Jensen's Report (2007), 54 countries in Africa had Internet connectivity. By the year 2009 however, internet penetration as a percentage of the total population of Africa was still 1.4% compared to the world average penetration of 12.7% (Internet Worldstats.com2009). The internet has provided a wider access to global information resources such as online database, e-journals, e-prints and other sources of digital information, these resources are not effectively utilized due to varying factors. According to Missen et al. (2005), the Internet poses African Universities to gain equal footing with their sister institutions in the more developing countries. It is imperative that African Universities be connected if they are not to be rendered irrelevant in the modern academic world. The internet is very useful as a communications tool in the Universities among librarians and library clientele.

It is the most efficient means of electronic document delivery (Al Fadhli and Johnson, 2006).

➤ **Online database**

The most effective way to provide access to electronic books/journals in University libraries is through subscription to online databases which can be accessed through the internet. Online databases are a collection of electronic information sources (e-journals/e-books) by publishers from various fields and disciplines, (Afolabi, 2007). Some of these databases are provided free of charge to libraries in developing countries by their publishers or vendors. Some of these include NARI, <http://www.healthinternetwork.org/scipub.php> AGORA: <http://www.agininternetwork.org/en/>. Other require subscription fee such as emerald database, <http://www.emeraldinsight.com> and Blackwelsynergy:<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com> among others. Access to these databases provides researchers with thousands of scholarly articles in their field of specialization or research (Fatoki, 2004). For librarians to utilize the growing range of electronic resources they must acquire and practice the skills necessary to exploit them (Okello-Obura 2010)

➤ **CD-ROM database**

CD-ROM databases allow users access to relevant databases without robust Internet connectivity in libraries. It is therefore cost effective than online databases as information could be accessed off-line without paying for telecommunications fee (Afolabi, 2007). Besides, CD-ROM databases are of immense value over print if they system is networked, as patrons at their terminals could access information without coming to the library. The information revolution brought forth by advances in information and communication technology has enabled universities and colleges around the world to take advantage of these developments. New modes of teaching, learning and accessing information have emerged as a result of internet and World Wide Web (Darkwa et al 2007). CD-ROM databases are important tools for identifying the bibliographic details of potentially useful documents and ensure easy access to large volumes of literature for research.

Methodology

This study was carried out using a social survey method. The research instrument adopted for the study was questionnaire. The instrument was structured to assess relevant information about certified librarian's perception on e-resources collections development policy in Nigeria libraries. It was validated using expert opinion. The reliability of the instrument was tested using test-retest method. Twenty five questionnaires were administered to

librarians in Abuja, the capital city of Nigeria. The completed questionnaire were returned and re-administered to the same set of librarians, and the responses were the same with the previous ones. The population of the study was 364 (1st conference of certified librarians of Nigeria) from various libraries and institutions across Nigeria by the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) on the 18th– 23rd May, 2014. A total of 252 respondents were selected out of the total population. The researcher administered and collected the questionnaire from the respondents. Thus there was 91.2% response rate were completed and returned. The data collected through questionnaire are here by analyzed using simple percentages were adopted for easy analysis and interpretation.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Out of 252 copies of the questionnaire that were administered to, 1st conference of certified librarians in Nigeria, 230 (91.2%) were retrieved. The data from the retrieved questionnaire are hereby analyzed using simple statistic like frequencies, bar chart, tables and percentages.

Figure 1: Showing Distribution of Respondents by Sex

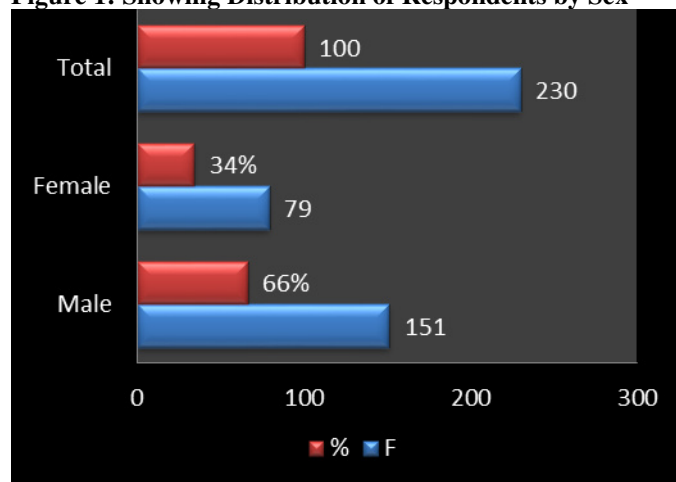
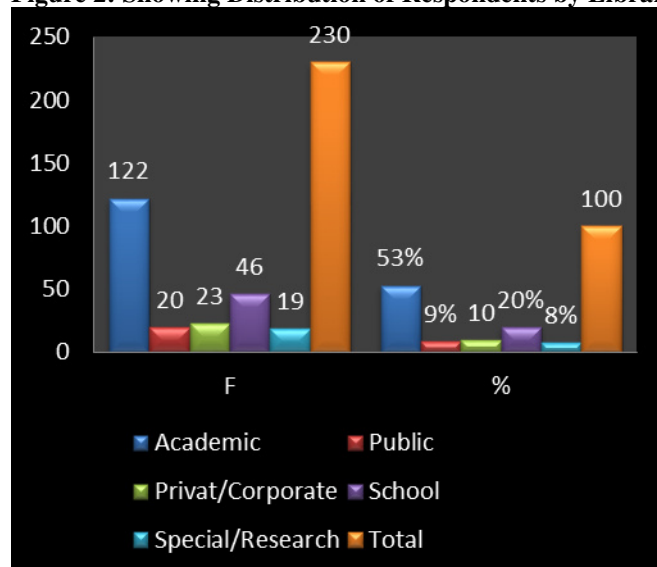


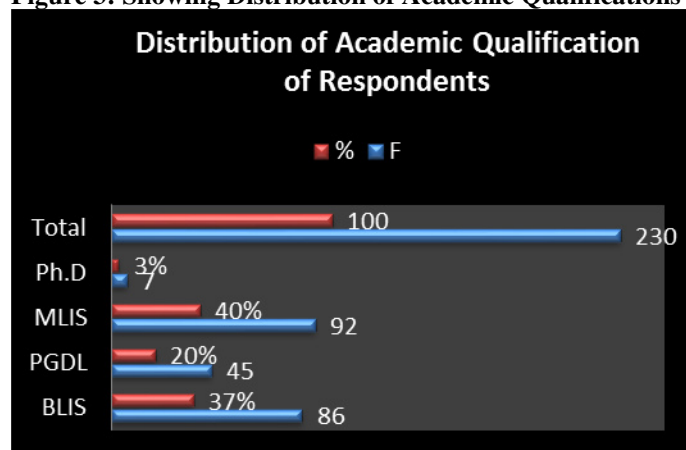
Figure 1 shows that 66% of respondents are male while 34% are female. This represents the gender distribution of certified librarians involved in the survey.

Figure 2: Showing Distribution of Respondents by Libraries



Respondents in the survey cut across the different types of libraries that are available in Nigeria. A larger percentage (53%) is academic librarians while other categories were equally represented. This includes public librarians (9%), private/corporate librarians (10%), school librarians (20%), and special/research librarians (8%) librarians in Nigeria.

Figure 3: Showing Distribution of Academic Qualifications of Respondents



As observed from figure 3, majorities (40%) of the respondents have masters in library science; 37% had first degree in library science; 20% had post graduate diploma in library science; 3% had doctor of philosophy in library science.

Figure 4: Year of Certified of Respondents

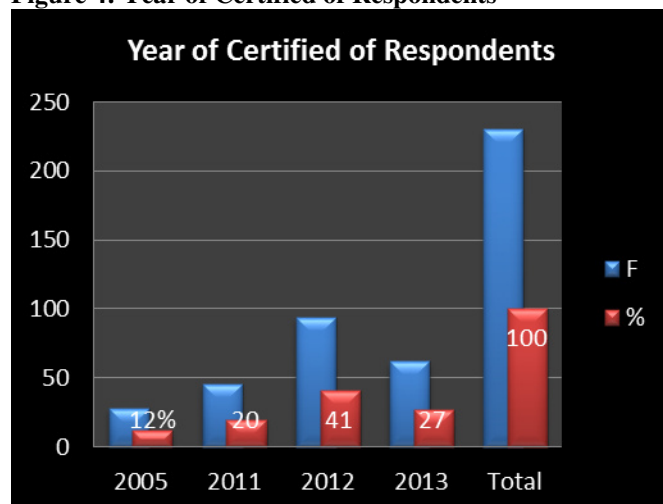


Figure 4 shows that 2012 certified librarians of Nigeria were the highest participants in the conference which records (41%); followed by 2013 with (27%); while 2011 had a participant of (20%); and 2005 with (12%). In nutshell, the first set of librarians, numbering 536, was certified in May, 2005, the second set numbering 1,177, was certified in August, 2011, the third batch numbering 948 was certified in September, 2012 then fourth batch numbering 603, was certified in June, 2013. It presently has about 3,264 records of certified librarians. LRCN is the 23rd parastatal under the Federal ministry of Education. It is a regulatory body for the growth and development of the LIS sector in Nigeria.

Table 1: Certified Librarians Perceptions on Availability of E-collection Policy

Availability of E-resources policy	F	%		Type of policy		
					F	%
Yes	108	47		written	86	37
No	122	53		Unwritten	144	63
Total	230	100		Total	230	100

Average number (47%) of libraries has an e-collection development policy. Meanwhile, majority of them have an unwritten policy. A policy is a written statement of plan, procedure or processes to execute a particular task. It

is obvious that many libraries do not have an e-collection development policy. We are in an information management era where the form and approaches to information management particularly digital information sources are dynamic. An efficient and effective policy is necessary to meet up with the challenges of e-resources management in libraries. The policy is expected to trace the developments in information management and cause improved information services to the library clients. IFLA in 2012 developed and released a draft of e-resources development policy for libraries. This collection development is a comprehensive and effective instrument to facilitate the process of e-resources management and provide guide to libraries as well as librarians. In the same vein, the LRCN is working with relevant stakeholders in Nigeria to formulate and develop e-library standard for the library and information science sector in the country. These are initiatives that libraries should take advantage of and render quality services to their clients.

Table: 2 E-collection Development Tools

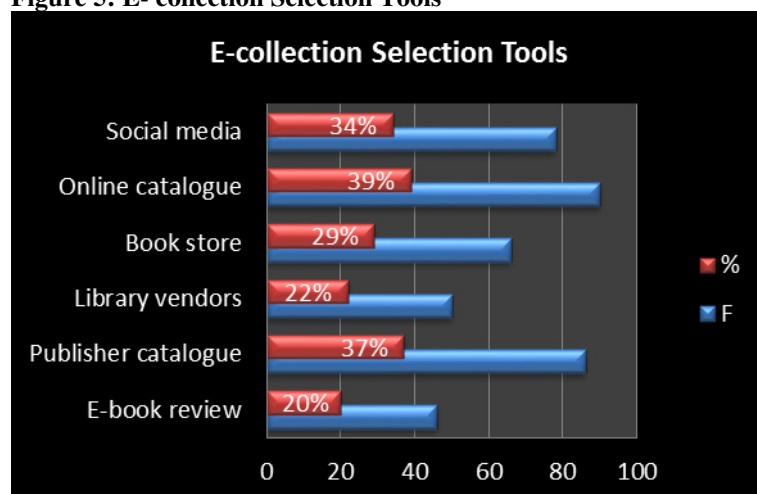
E-collection management tools	Yes	%	No	%	Total(F)	Total
E-collection selection criteria	84	37	146	63	230	100
E-collection committee	62	27	168	73	230	100
E-collection management training	108	47	122	53	230	100
E-collection budget	60	26	170	74	230	100
Availability of internet facilities	214	93	16	7	230	100

It is obvious from table 2 that 63%, 73%, and 74% of libraries do not have e-collection selection criteria, evaluation committee, and special budget for e-collection development and management. These instruments are vital to the proper management of e-collection in libraries. A selection criteria though, a subset of the e-collection policy is very vital aspect of collection development and management. A committee to guide the process of selection and management of e-collection of libraries is also very important in e-collection management. "Two head is better than one," the decision of evaluation and selection committee is likely to facilitate better e-collection management. Budget is another crucial element in the execution of projects. This also applies to library projects; a good financial plan for e-collection will guide the direction of decision making, planning and execution of e-collection development policy. Within the overall budget for the library or organization, a handsome specific budget should be made for e-collection development and management.

Average number (47%) of librarians had training related to e-resources management in libraries. This needed to be improved upon because a larger percentage of information sources are now in electronic form and librarians should not have excuse for poor management of these resources. The library materials both print and electronic are the libraries stock in trade; it is what we stock that our clients appreciate. However, librarians in Nigeria should take full advantage of the capacity building for library and information managers in the country being undertaken by the LRCN to equip them with basic knowledge and skills to manage e-resources of the library. LRCN organized e-library management training and has also line up a series of training workshops majorly in ICT and e-resources management for library and information managers in the country

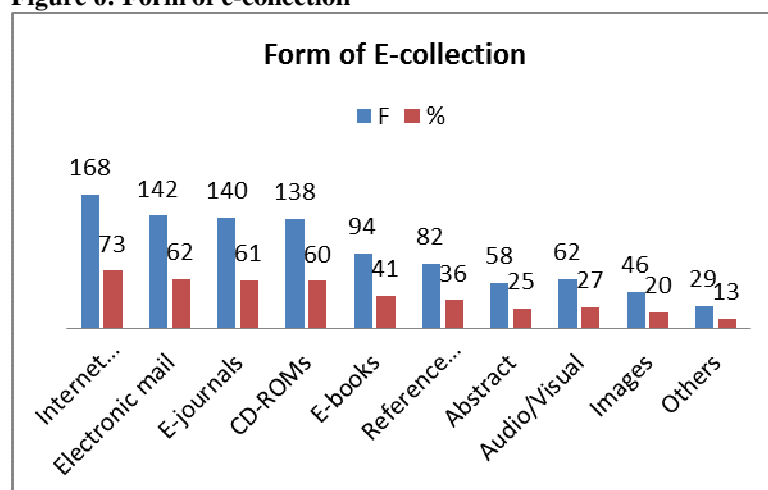
A larger percentage (93%) of libraries had internet facility. This is a good development as internet is major to access and acquisition of electronic resources for libraries. Effort should be made to take adequate advantage of this vital resource for efficient and effective information services delivery. It is not enough have internet facilities, librarians needed to be knowledge and skill to use them to package and repackage information sources and services for their clients.

Figure 5: E- collection Selection Tools



The e-collection and acquisition tools used in Nigerian libraries include e-book reviews, publishers' catalogue, e-resources vendors, OPAC, and the social media. Meanwhile, the one mostly used are publisher's catalogue (37%) and OPAC (39%).

Figure 6: Form of e-collection



The forms of electronic resources available in the libraries are internet search engines, electronic mail, e-journals, CD-ROMs, e-books, references sources, abstract, audio/visual, images and others. But the major forms of e-collection been used in the libraries are internet search engines (73%), electronic mail (62%), e-journals (61%), CD-ROM (60%). This is in line with (Al Fadhli and Johnson, 2006). The internet is very useful as a communications tool in the Universities among librarians and library clientele. It is the most efficient means of electronic document delivery.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers concluded that, the nature and form of e-resources are dynamic and flexible. This made it imperative for libraries and information centers to put measures in place to efficiently and effectively manage them for better service delivery. Libraries as well as librarians should live up to the challenge and make sure that e-resources are managed to the advantage of the users. They can render meaningful services from e-resources, provided they are well knowledgeable and skillful in handling of e-resources tools and techniques. The situation of lack of e-collection policy, committee and selection criteria can be traced to inadequate knowledge and skill of libraries and librarians in e-resources management.

Based on the finding, this study thus recommend as follow

1. Libraries should train and retrain information workers on the efficient and effective e-collection development and management.

2. They need to formulate and develop e-collection development and management policy. This may be done by adopting the e-collection development policy of IFLA or having a home grown policy.
3. A good financial plan is also important for e-collection development and management strategy. Libraries or parent organization should make adequate financial provision for e-resource management.
4. The task of e-collection development is not an individual one; libraries should ensure that they constitute an e-collection development and evaluation committee to guide the process of e-resources management.
5. Efforts should be made by the head of the library to overcome any social, political, economic and environmental factors.
6. Nigerian Library Association (NLA) should create a standard policy and ensure compliance by all libraries for them to enjoy increased funding.
7. High proficiency in acquisition processes can improve the status of an academic library.
8. LRCN as the regulatory body for the practice of librarianship in Nigeria should come with more digital resources management training for library and information managers in Nigeria cutting across the various geo-political zones of the country.
9. LRCN should also formulate and develop home grown standard for e-resources management in Nigerian libraries. Also, individual's libraries in Nigerian should organize periodic training on proper management of electronic resources in their libraries.

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